832 I was unable to discover during the subsequent dance. The concluding celebration took place in the love grove. A man seized the tree with one hand and swayed about, while the others took the skulls from the traps, danced with them in the opposite direction around the tree, and were embraced by him every time they passed him. Then the festive goat was [832] brought and slaughtered, its blood was poured over the skulls and medicines, and a speech of conciliation was addressed to

Fig. 59.

[824] Love Medicine of the Wood of Monodora tenuifolia.

the skulls. This speech culminated with the request that they should not be angry for having lain outside without food; a goat had now been brought to them, and they were from now on expected to make every effort to assist their descendants in matters of the heart. So the festival ended to the satisfaction of both the skulls and the young men.

It would be impossible here to cite by name all the plants 832 used for love medicines; all we can do is to mention the 824 criteria that were paramount in choosing them, as well as a number of examples. In each case, some quality that is to be transferred to the person is involved, for example, the following.

1. Abundance of blossoms, fruit, and shoots, especially when the blossoms or shoots are beautiful; the desire is to appear likewise in the eyes of the beloved. Monodora tenuifolia Bth. (fŏb IV), (Fig. 59), because of its luxuriant shoots with magnificent leaves; furthermore, the Simarubacea Desbordesia glaucescens Engl. (alŏ'b), with its resplendent red to blue shoots.

2. Beauty of the blossoms. Examples: many orchids (ajă'n-ojŏ'b) and Scitamineae, like Aframomum hanburyi K. Sch. obă[s]-adzŏm, blossoms atsă[k] adzŏm) and Canna bidentata Bertol (ekōn e zŏk); furthermore, Mussaenda species, which have colorful top leaves.

276 778 787 village which is called ngun [75] melan; he carries the bieri on his shoulder and appears to collapse under its weight. That position is a manner of worshipping the fetish. When everyone has gathered, animals, fowls, or kids are sacrificed; then, to the accompaniment of tomtoms, the neophytes dance, sing, and cry out, all the while chewing pieces of alan prepared the previous day. After a certain time, the effect of the root, combined with the excitement of the dances and songs, causes most of the participants of the celebration to become unconscious after many spasms. This unconsciousness may last two or three hours, during which the individuals retain a corpse-like stiffness. On awakening, each tells the elders what he has seen or what the bieri has told him in his dream. One may have been ordered to hunt, with the assurance of killing many antelope; another may have been warned of the impending death of a member of his family; still another may have been told of the imminent pregnancy of a brother's wife. All the Pahouin whom we have questioned state that predictions made by the bieri to people drunk with alan always come true.

Then the neophytes have the right to look at the bieri, whose boxes are open, making a vow not to speak of them to anyone who has not undergone the initiation of alan. Every uninitiated person who looks at a bieri falls ill, and only the care of a competent practitioner can prevent his death.

782 778 When a family head wants to supplicate his bieri, he sacrifices a hen, a duck, or a kid, or offers it the hind leg of an animal killed in the hunt, and pours blood on the skull. The meat is cooked in leaves by a woman, then taken to the bieri with stalks of manioc or a mash of bananas and water, by the one making the sacrifice. If, for example, the bieri is appealed to before a hunt, he who makes the sacrifice presents the food with these words:

"O tar ta mba bidzi olun wa to we nlem e to ma tune we yü, Binyu bon be wa y onzan vag bie betsir" (O father, see the good food, I want to dispel the anger that is in your heart. Your children die of want, give us meat).

778 782 787 Then he goes out of the hut because the bieri will not eat in the presence of a living being. Several hours later he comes back to look for the food left by the bieri. Its consumption, however, is not visible as it is accomplished immaterially. This food that has been brought to the watchers' hut [corps de garde] will be eaten only by the

initiates. Anyone else who eats it will become mortally ill. During the following night, the bieri will reveal to an initiate during his sleep the means of assuring the success of the hunt for which his help has been asked.

The bieri strictly forbids anyone, under pain of mortal illness, to [76] insult it. Its power is unlimited: it can cause a woman who has fled from the village to return to it; it causes lost objects to be found.

In spite of all the faith which the old Pahouin still have in the bieri, in the region which interests us one may say that the majority of the population has abandoned it, primarily because of its being driven out by the Christian missions.

IV. The buiti. The buiti, which our informants told us were of Mitsogho [Mitsogo] or Masango [Missanga?] origin (peoples of the right bank of the N'Gounié), is a protective association against the bivur. The information on this secret society was given us by Akam Eyene, the head of a buiti, who lived in the village Elong Eko on the Abanga. It is rather incomplete because this informant was unwilling to give us certain details and to answer numerous questions.

Possessors of bieri band together because of the fear of the bivur, against which the bieri by itself is powerless to protect them. Their association, the buiti, in its fight against the ngwel, shows itself as stronger and kills the bivur (and consequently the individual possessors of bivur). It also serves to reveal the beyem, who have evil intentions toward members of the buiti and to make their efforts ineffectual.

Every member of the buiti brings a piece of his bieri and a piece of the animal under whose protection he has placed himself. All of these are put in a box and constitute the fetish of the association, which also keeps such material things as:

A musical instrument, ngomi, a harp with eight strings. At the bottom of the resonance chamber of the one belonging to Akam Eyene were pierced three holes covered by three pieces of flesh of chimpanzee, gorilla, snake, elephant, eagle, panther, and rooster. This instrument accompanies the songs of the ceremony.

A bell, etsoge, a round hollowed-out fruit, into which are put little pebbles. It is equipped with a handle and is shaken during the songs.

A branch of raphia palm lying horizontally on two carved stakes called minsaga mi buiti. The whole thing is called obaka. During the ceremonies this branch is beaten with two sticks.

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des Mfang [The Éki of the Fang]," Anthropos, Vol. 1, 1906.

interesting for the last point it brings up; it indicates a test, it shows above all with unquestionable brutality that all power existing outside the clan and the kinship is acquired only after making the more or less symbolic gesture of "killing the kinship." It is by the interplay of [145] such groupings that the logic of the system of kinship and of alliance by marriage is transcended.

"Associations" have a function whose import varies according to particular circumstances. They intervene to create a better cohesion between clan fragments, as is shown by the grouping of [171] initiates at the Bièri (Gabon cult) or at the Ssò (Cameroons cult known to the frontier villages); this at a time when insecurity demands a minimum of union among related villages. In other circumstances, they attempt to reinforce the inherent power of functions whose importance is affirmed: as in the case of groupings that controlled the ancient "dance of justice" (sòmana) at the time when peaceful settlement of conflicts remained the only one possible, and when the role of "peacemaker" was of primary importance. As is shown by the feminine "associations," they may also act as a curb on the domination to which a social group of inferior status is subjected. This is all the more marked as the decay of these groupings has been paralleled by the change in the relations between the sexes. We have pointed out, in connection with the Ngil, that "associations" have acted as the mechanism for higher appeal for the purpose of pacification. We must now stress the fact that some of them assume an almost permanent role of opposition to the social order.

754 776 782 Such is the case of the "association" of men known as sorcerers (pl. bŏyèm), who endeavor to acquire permanently, and in their own personal right, "wealth, strength, and power." Each one has been admitted in terms of an absolute differentiation – the possession of a "spirit" called évu(r) (s) which is physically distinguishable (1) – and with a special initiation, the latter entails the

1. Cf. H. Lavignotte, L'évur, Société

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des Missions Evangéliques, 1947; E. Trézenem, op. cit., II, L'évur, pp. 68-74; M. Briault, op. cit., Captain Maignan, op. cit. We point out that this is a belief which is widely spread throughout South Gabon and as far as the country of the Ba-téké.

obligation to break off (more than symbolically) the ties of kinship and alliance: by the sacrifice of the first child if a woman is in question, and of the maternal uncle if it is a man.

754 776 The évur is received before birth or during the first week following birth. It transforms the organism of the individual carrying it since it can be detached at the time of an autopsy; (2)

2. It is described as follows: "It is a beast with paws, eyes, a mouth, and a tongue ... it can travel through the body ....," M. Briault, op. cit.

biologically the possessor (nnèm) and the évur are linked together; the latter "grows with the child and attains its full vitality [146] only when the child becomes an adult." Their respective powers are dependent on each other and demand sacrifices for their preservation. The bond between the two is continually shown by the play of interdicts and special obligations from which the nnèm "cannot free himself." Everything contributes to make the nnèm feel he has a different nature; even the ritual at the time of the two fundamental ceremonies celebrates the "birth" of the new nnèm and his "maturity" which permits the acts of domination. H. Lavignotte writes: "The évur lives in the body of its possessor, allowing him to split himself in two, or rather to leave his body to act in his place, to know the secrets of the other böyèm (plural of nnèm) to increase his strength tenfold, to do extraordinary things that will make him rich, to kill without leaving a trace." E. Trézenem completes this account by specifying: "Except in the case of acting for the benefit of its possessor ... the évur is always

241 in 1954 in connection with a study of family budgets.

amount of food necessary to maintain the population: a crop census
[439] was taken in 1948 in one of the Sangmélima cantons (2). In order to

2. Report of the administrative officer, J. M. Soupault. An average individual's requirement would be: 250 maize plants, 330 manioc plants, 130 plantains, 110 macabo, 7 kilograms of rice, and 32 kilograms of groundnuts.

satisfy the needs of 6, 249 inhabitants there is no "exportation" to
[433] speak of. The canton used to produce 1, 635, 000 maize plants, 2, 049, 000 manioc, 824, 190 plantain bananas, 687, 800 macabo. It furthermore provided 44 tons of rice, 200 tons of groundnuts. There were 85, 180 fruit trees producing various kinds of fruit (Pachylobes /Canarium edula Hooker, known as assa in Pahouin country—Ed./, Estulis, oranges, etc.)

Clearing land by burning and the absence of organic fertilizer probably explain the exhaustion of the soil and the shifting cultivation that results from it.

231 The breeding and rearing of small animals is nevertheless understood and practiced: goats, dogs, fowls, pigs were and still are plentiful in the villages. These animals do not seem to contribute
[428] much to the food supply nor to the economic life. The very limited practice of selling pieces of pork has dates from recent years. As a
[431] matter of fact, animals were useful for giving quasi-ritual presents,
[432] for paying bride prices, and for celebrating family occasions: at a marriage, burial, and the end of mourning, two or three goats were killed to provide food for the relatives.

Of course, these animals are not stabled or fed; the herds wander
[571] along the outskirts of villages and do not fail to plunder the gardens. There are innumerable classic quarrels between farmers and herders (with the slight difference here that no one is exclusively a herder nor
357 exclusively a farmer). Was the practice of enclosing by hedges established so as to avoid such depredations, or to give military protection to the settlements? Whatever the origin, this practice associated with the raising of animals would have made it possible to avoid

631 Given Pahouin interest in a political system based on election, which
636 pretty well corresponds both with their individualism and with their
181 mistrust of individuals, it may be that such a system has some chance of success if it is allowed to become Pahounized.

5. Associations

575 Traditional associations were undoubtedly less developed among the Pahouin than among other African societies with more closely knit or more stable hierarchical structures. The social groups at the core of clans or villages arose and decayed in accordance with migrations and "swarmings-off." They showed a kinship rather than an associational character.

Nevertheless, there existed within kinship as well as outside it associations not based on descent, voluntary and not de facto /discretionary?/. These were often characterized by initiations and had a magical or religious basis, with varying purposes.

The minsamba, "societies," were temporary, organized for a military operation (ôban, mvéle) or for a trade journey to the coast or to the "trading-posts" of the Ogooué. The men who took part often came from different villages or even from different clans bound by an alliance (élat). They swore an oath of loyalty and mutual assistance, involving a ritual sacrifice followed by a communion
● 782 meal; for a war enterprise, there might be a human victim, especially if it were a matter of avenging the death, kum mbim, of a monyañ (brother) and if there were a prisoner of war available to sacrifice. The association was dissolved once its end had been accomplished, but a bond persisted between its members.

204 Similar temporary associations could be formed for large elephant
141 hunts; they were moreover often confused with the nsamba dulu or nsamba ayak (traveling society, trade society) afterward organized for the sale of the ivory.

575 The most important permanent associations were those among the
783 initiates of different rites. But what was most often involved in these was a kind of relationship by way of a rite, which was not the rite's real purpose, or was so only adventitiously. When, for instance, all the inhabitants of a village took part in the ésye purification rite, a strengthening of the fraternal ties among them certainly ensued, but the prime purpose was purification (1). /63/

preceded by drummers and trumpet players and by a boy (uncircumcised?) entrusted with holding across the village street a liana, which the cortege broke through only after sacrificing a chicken. The uninitiated did not have the right to be present at this procession. The ngil leader, masked and painted in red and white, carried his personal bieti (bieri); he was always accompanied by a full orchestra (mvet guitar, mbaé and nkul drums, mejañ balafo). The initiation ceremony lasted a month (1).

1. The ngil mark was a tattoo below the sacrum, therefore covered by the loincloth. Initiates did not go out except in masks, so that theoretically it was impossible to recognize them.

Members of the ngil circulated in small groups, masked, to carry out inquiries in villages where a case of sorcery was suspected or to put sorcerers to death. For ordinary cases they applied the ordeals in current use (minkal), but for serious cases it was necessary to arrange for an initiation ceremony: this feature is found in nearly all ritual associations, where initiation is always accompanied by collective catharsis.

Among other masculine initiation societies the ndôngô rite must be mentioned, whose initiates have two incisions on the nape of the neck. Its symbolic /features/ include confession, purification, seclusion in darkness, passage through a narrow corridor or a low doorway, a liana-serpent, a consecrated lance, a sacrifice (2), a

2. Dogs were sacrificed. Ndôngô canceled serious minsem /breaking a taboo/ like homicide or incest and allowed initiates to eat pork, mutton, and porcupine. (J. B.)

horrible brew. The ritual animal was the tortoise. The purpose of this rite seems also to have been protection against sorcerers and, perhaps, to improve luck, ma'a. The initiation of circumcised youths, bekungu, is perhaps a juvenile form of ndôngô. Both survived until the Second World War. Ndôngô does not seem to set up

769 The figure was placed on the new group's first family altar, and so afterwards were the skulls of the founder and of the benya bôtô of succeeding generations. A full biéri basket was the sign of a group's
554 antiquity, which doubtless implied prestige more than genuine authority, yet nevertheless represented the nearest approach to political authority that existed in the Fang group, particularly if one takes into account the fact that officials of interclan associations were chosen from among the owners of many skulls, whence prestige extended to a large number of mvôk or meyom. The prestige of the living was exerted through the authority of the dead.

826 Skulls were, indeed, the seat or receptacle of the individual's capacity for action (we must remember that bo = to make, boo = brain), and the use of skulls in the practice of magic was not confined to ancestral skulls only: the skulls of enemies killed in battle or sacrificed in anthropophagous ceremonies before or afterward were preserved, and so were those stolen from neighbors. In the same way the skulls of the kinds of animals desired were used for hunting rites. However, it seems that a distinction was made between family skulls and outsiders' skulls, only the first having a place in the éwolé biéti and
782 appearing in family rites. The power of the skulls was increased by sprinkling them with sacrificial blood.

769 When a youth reached nya môtô age he had to learn to recognize
869 his ancestors so as to be able to ask for their help when the occasion
881 arose. Their skulls were shown to him until he could identify them individually and put them in the correct genealogical order. When
276 he was able to do this, he was given a brew of the narcotic herb alan, then spent a night in the biéti hut, facing the skulls, which had been removed from the éwolé and placed on the altar on which strongly scented plants were burned. During the night the ancestors appeared and gave him a cognomen and imposed one or more new taboos (at the same time he was relieved of certain prohibitions connected with age). Apparently it was during this initiation that his individual totem was revealed (if it was indeed a totem).

769 This question of the totem is very poorly elucidated, in spite of
614 some 600 pages devoted to the subject by Father Trilles. He dis-
114 tinguishes between clan, segment, individual, family, and society totems, etc. He also distinguishes a tutelary being, mvame, from the "effect of a tutelary being"; akam, an animal totem, from a dedicated animal or an incarnation of a man in an animal, etc. He

773 the animal pursuing the ancestors of the Fang in order to devour them, while the legendary history of migration collected in the north shows, on the contrary, the crocodile enabling the tribe to cross the Osoé Nnanga (the python performs this service for the Beti).

776 The observation made by the authors quoted on the "unsuperstitious" character of the Pahouin and of the slight development /113/ of "fetishism" among them is to be related to the almost total absence in their mythology of beings intermediary between God and man, genii or demigods.

774 825 Aside from the bivur, to be discussed in connection with sorcery, there are only the bingungur (Fang) (Boulou, bingôngôt) shown in some legends as kinds of ogres or ghouls haunting forests and attacking travelers. According to another interpretation, these rather are evil animals endowed with intelligence and malevolence beyond that of normal members of their species, perhaps animal sorcerers. The inoffensive aardvark, mvômesila, is thus very much feared; also a sort of very rare Pithecanthropus (Fang, éngure; Boulou, éngu'u) and a mermaid, the mammywôta of the coast, no doubt a lamantin /or manatee/. For Trilles, the éngungure is a "spirit, often transformed into an animal, which sorcers obey"; may there not be a confusion here with the évur (Boulou, évu)?

775 769 As for ghosts, bekôn, it might be said that there are good ones but no nice ones. One may usually get on with the kôn of a properly buried forebear who was respected in his lifetime and even obtain useful services from him, formerly paid for by sacrifices and libations to his skull and often today by candles, Masses, or prayers (I have known Protestants to go to Catholic missionaries for exorcism). There is more difficulty /in dealing/ with the kôn of a sorcerer or with that of a stranger neither whose name nor whose skull is in one's possession.

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266 Lawful /non criminelle/ anthropophagy probably had for an end, among others, that of acquiring power over the bekôn of enemies and perhaps of assimilating the rights they derived from their ancestors. This wartime cannibalism appears to have existed especially on the geographical fringes of the group and particularly along the invasion front, among the Fang proper, the vanguard of the migration. A relative or affinal kin was never eaten, only strangers, and these only by warriors (or sometimes by sons of warriors killed by the enemy). It is worth noting that for the cannibalism of the Fang and Osyéba only the "Gabonese" felt the terror described by all explorers. The

the leaders who will be there, as each has his private mark. That's all."

"But why are some pointed and others not?"

"Oh, that! No, that's a deep secret. If I were to tell you that I'd be punished by death at the next meeting."

[Pages 454-462 omitted. --Translator] [463]

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

All practitioners' societies recognize ritual sacrifice. In many cases a human victim is slain and eaten. These sacrifices are often characterized by what seems to us revolting cruelty and horror. I shall have occasion to deal with this point more fully when discussing sacrifice.

These are ritual sacrifices: immolation is not done for the pleasure of killing any more than consuming the victim is for the pleasure of eating human flesh. This is so much the case that a woman is never sacrificed: "Munga kɛ́ dzamadzam, kɛ́ kie ve nsissim: A woman is of no importance (from the sacrificial point of view)," runs a Fan proverb, "She has no power over spirits because she has no soul."

At sorcerer's feasts, on the contrary, and in the societies they organize, men are eaten for the pleasure of eating human flesh.

According to all the Fan and all Africans, sorcerers leave their boeies in order to go and feed on the hearts of other men while asleep. Hence their name, bɛ́ndzi bur, eaters of men. Sometimes they do this themselves, sometimes it is done by a spirit that possesses them. I willingly admit, of course, that there is nothing true in these accusations, at least as regards the way in which the sorcerers work. But one thing is undeniable, the fact of cannibalism.

[One paragraph omitted; p. 464 omitted. --Editor]

Chapter XIV

Totems of Sorcerers and of their Secret Societies

The Nagual and Nagualism

[Summary omitted--Translator] [466]

575 791 825 of danger. Hence the symbolic choice of fast birds: the river swallow, the koulyèbe that flies like an arrow, the eagle or the vulture whose powerful flight protects it from enemies, the turtledove or the wood pigeon that knows how to conceal a nest so as to escape all attention. Or it might be an antelope with nimble legs and acute hearing, [482] which is especially difficult to capture. Finally, the crocodile sometimes appears as a totem not because it is bad tempered and devours men, but because it is always on the watch and at the slightest disturbance submerges itself and disappears in the river or because its scaly covering makes it invulnerable to arrows and javelins.

Such are the qualities that a secret society demands for itself.

575 791 ●782 The "consecrator" has chosen the totem, generally that of a class. He must now procure one himself but catch it "alive." He brings it into the hut of the "consecrated" one, who keeps it, at least as much as possible, on his chest throughout a whole night. In the morning the totem is led with great ceremony to the middle of a clearing and sprinkled with lustral water: the attending practitioners dance around it, then sing the hymn to the totem; the candidate sings it along with them. This hymn extols the totem's strength, valor, and swiftness, and especially thanks it for the protection given the society. Then, after this hymn, the candidate fetches the victim, whom he must offer, and leads him [567 562] before the totem. Ordinarily, the victim is a foreign slave, because he should not belong to the Fan nation, in order to avoid any possible ritual offense. (1) It is, however, permissible --

> 1. A foreign slave or a woman is chosen because neither possesses a totem and therefore no ritual offense is to be feared.

and this often happens -- to take a Fan woman. The slave or [278] woman is tightly gagged. Usually no resistance is offered, especially since the victim is given alɛ́wanɛ́ to drink the evening before, a decoction of herbs and woody mushrooms that have the property of suppressing memory. The neophyte forces the victim to walk in front of him, or pushes him, going around the totem

575 three times. He then pulls him down to the ground, binds him
791 in front of the totem, and with one stroke of the mfor cuts the
782 carotid arteries. The blood is collected in a clay pot, which is carefully broken after the ceremony and buried. When the blood has stopped flowing, the practitioners approach. The leader, the others next, and the neophyte last, dip their hands into the pot and sprinkle the totem while they dance around it. [483]

575 Right after this the head practitioner approaches the totem
791 and smears its neck with the victim's blood, then with one stroke
782 cuts its arteries. The spouting blood is collected with care be-
266 cause no drop must fall on the ground, to avoid any profanation. The victim's blood is mixed with the totem's, and everyone dips his hand into the pot and stirs; when the contents have been thoroughly mixed, the pot is put on a fire that has been prepared and, as soon as the blood starts to coagulate, each person present approaches and drinks a bit. The neophyte takes his turn last and has to drink all that is left no matter how much.

The victim and the totem are then placed on a special pyre. Often the victim's body is opened and the heart removed and the totem's body put in its place. When the fire has pretty well roasted both bodies, they are taken off and the victim's is put aside for eating. The totem is put back on the fire and entirely consumed, except that its burnt and pulverized bones are preserved. The victim's bones are also kept and reduced to ash so that they may be mingled with the totem's. These ashes are eventually divided among all those present; the larger share go-
789 ing to the new practitioner to form his "totemic" fetish, which he will make use of whenever he appeals to his totem. In particular, when he takes part in the "consecration" of a new practitioner, he will, after the immolation of the totem as just described, put a pinch of these ashes on the totem's body: all his colleagues will do the same, in order to mystically unite all the totems in a common sacrifice.

At the end of the ceremony, the new practitioner must get rid of all signs of it before he returns to the village. He must see to it that no drop of blood, no trace of ash, be profaned. He breaks up the pyre, buries the pot for blood at a distance, and goes home only then, invested with a new dignity.

7: Trilles--41 M-5 (1893-1912) 1912 FH9 Fang FH9

119 Of these, sacrifice is by far the most important. It is required; without it, in one form or another, there would be no rite, no cult ceremony.

I. Totemic Sacrifice

119 ●182 Sacrifice is the basis of all totemism. Totemic activities, whatever they may be, depend upon sacrifice, as do all the religious activities of the African.

At first glance, there appears to be considerable variety in sacrifices. Various authors have attempted to classify them. (1)

1. Cf. Hubert and Mauss, Le sacrifice, Mélanges d'histoire des Religions [Sacrifice, Miscellany on the History of Religion] (Paris, 1909), pp. 16 ff., Lagrange, Études sur les Religions sémitiques [Studies in Semitic Religion], pp. 249; Reinach, Cultes, Mythes, Religions [Cults, Myths, Religions] Vol. 1, pp. 2-3 ff.; Bros, op. cit. [Religion des peuples non civilisés (Religion of Noncivilized People)], p. 143; Le Roy, op. cit., [La Religion des Primitifs (The Religion of Primitives), (Paris, 1909), pp. 322 ff. [502]

We shall discuss only two kinds here, without being concerned about distinctions:

1. Sacrifice to the totem
2. Sacrifice of the totem (1)

1. W. R. Smith (article on "Sacrifice" in the Encyclopedia Britannica) acknowledges sacrifice as a totemic rite; in his opinion, it is a blood covenant, a communal meal at which the faithful eat their totem god so as to assimilate his

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power, to make or renew their covenant with him. The slaughter has no other purpose except to permit communion. This is not found in all sacrifice, because, through the evolution of ideas, the notion of the "sacred" has acquired such importance that the god is merely a surviving rite, whose origin is inevitably explained by mythology.

In the view of Hubert and Mauss, sacrifice is based on belief in a vague, divine power which one can master by magical sacrifices. The purpose of sacrifice is to establish communication between the sacred world possessing these powers and the profane world, through a victim, that is, an object destroyed in the course of the ceremony. To fulfill this purpose, the victim is consecrated; by means of magic all the divine powers are concentrated in the victim and they are increased by being liberated by the immolation. The religious agent, the person offering the sacrifice, and the faithful are made partakers of this power. The victim's approach must be prepared for, hence the purifying rites.

Father Lagrange's theory acknowledges animism and gods, instead of magical forces.

a) Sacrice of the totem

The totem is "sacred" in itself. Mvame a ne ɛki. It is forbidden to offend it, even in speech, and that under severe penalties, all the more so to wound and, above all, to kill it. Should this happen, the act always entails punishment and expiation, two completely separate things, to which we shall return when discussing the sacrifice made to the totem.

779 How can these facts be reconciled with the sacrifice of
782 the totem itself?

Sacrifice of a totem animal belongs to a special order of ideas. First of all, observe that we may use the term "animal." In fact, a totem is generally a living being. When this is not the case, the practitioner or religious agent of the sacrifice, the "sacrificing one," has the right to make a substitution, that is, to "animalize in another living being" the totem that is a spirit, a celestial phenomenon or a mineral, etc. [503]

779 "The totem animal is the one with whom, or rather with
782 whose tribe, a man, representing his own person and his
675 descendants, has made a covenant, in order to obtain services in return. This agreement usually (and we have seen that this was always the case among the Fan) "was sealed by an exchange of blood in such a way that animal and man, the family of the one and of the other, the tribe uof the first and the tribe of the second, are individuals, families, or tribes of the same blood. They are allied. From time to time it is a good thing to renew this covenant, and that is done by sacrificing a representative of the animal family, a sacrifice in which man takes part as a communicant: there is a new blood exchange, a revival of the first covenant. In addition, it is a reinforcement of the special virtues of the totem, virtues which are perhaps strengthened by the presence or influence of the ancestral spirit in the animal or vegetable so consecrated, sacrificed, and eaten." (1)

1. Le Roy, op. cit., pp. 324-325.

779 In what circumstances, how and why, will the totem ani-
782 mal be thus sacrificed? For it is probably not enough to say, with the distinguished author just quoted, "From time to time it is a good thing to renew this covenant."

There will be a sacrifice of the totem:

1. Whenever a new totem is to be chosen.

This happens, first, at each "birth" in the most inclusive sense of the word or, again, at each "beginning of a new life." Such would be the establishment of a new clan, at which time the chief's totem becomes the clan totem instead of merely the

family one. Likewise, in the case of an individual, there will be sacrifice of the totem after birth, when the child has been accepted by his father and admitted for the first time into the tribe and receives his personal totem. And there will be another sacrifice of the totem upon his initiation as a warrior, his entry into a secret society, at each stage in initiation, in short, upon each change of totem or introduction to a totem.

2. Whenever the tribe, the clan, or the secret society, sometimes the family and even the individual, undergoes a critical experience [504] involving danger to life and needs to call upon totemic aid in a special way. The religious head of the group in danger, after the necessary sacrifices, will have to decide whether or not this offering and new exchange of blood is expedient.

3. In certain cases it may happen that the "materialized" totem has been lost: if, for instance, in battle or any kind of fighting, the akaméyôn, (1) the materialized totem representing

1. Akaleméyôn and akaméyôn are both used.

the actual covenant of the tribe with its real totem, falls into the enemy's hands. Sometimes the victors may even demand the surrender of the akaméyôn. Or the loss may be casual, the result of accident, shipwreck, etc. In all such cases, the akale or materialized totem will have to be replaced, whether it pertains to the nation, clan, family, or individual. The ceremony will vary in elaborateness according to the occasion or the organized group. It will not be very important when a single person is involved, but more so for a clan or tribe, and especially so when there is danger or when the totem has fallen into enemy hands.

Whatever the case may be, the ceremony follows the same broad lines. First of all, there will be an offering or sacrifice to the totem, sometimes a simple gift of fruit, oil, or first fruits, sometimes the sacrifice of an animal, occasionally even the sacrifice of a human being. We have given several

779 examples. After the victim has been offered to the totem,
• 782 the latter will itself be immolated, with all the prescribed ritual; then comes the eating or partaking of the totem itself. In this way the ancient covenant is renewed, though on a new basis. It means binding the present to the past and making certain in clear and recognizable fashion, the continuance of the totemic agreement concluded by the first ancestor of the race.

The sacrifice of the totem therefore gives us the basic idea which must have guided primitive sacrifice. First of all, it was an "offering," not a "tax" granted to a recognized master, as Le Roy puts it, for totemic sacrifice does not admit of this notion at all, but rather as the expiation of ritual but necessary murder. This notion is confirmed [505] by the fact that the sacrifice offered "beforehand" to the sacrificed totem is the same as that which ought to be offered as ritual compensation for accidental murder. The totem having been appeased in advance, the "offering" proper is then made. After a series of consecutive consecrations, the "sacrificing person," the chief or practitioner representing the organized group over which he presides, calls "into himself" the genius of the race, the power of the ancestors. But this power rests in, and inhabits, an invisible world, the world of spirits; the actual totem must be carried into that world and put to death in order that it may penetrate it. So, before the ceremony, the "sacrificing person," as representative of that world of spirits, will take care to paint himself with liturgical colors; [with] red, the color of sacrifice, and white, the color of funerals but especially of spirits, deified souls of the dead, ghosts, of all disembodied forces.

Thus totem and victim will be adorned in the same colors, and only then will the "immolation" take place.

After the immolation comes the exchange of blood.

The totem's blood has been carefully collected; those taking part make slight incisions in their arms, squeeze out a little blood, put some on a leaf, take a few drops of the totem's blood and mix it with their own on the leaf. Finally, they apply the leaf to the cuts on their arms and rub energetically so as to make the mixture of bloods penetrate to the depths of the

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●782 wound. Only after this ceremony do the "participants" renew their covenant by drinking the totem's blood.

"Communion" follows the exchange of blood. This does not always take place; often only the victim that has been offered is shared by everyone, after it is roasted. If the totemic animal is very small, only the future possessor of this totem will receive it as a sacrament. Sometimes, instead of communion based on the totem, the participants only divide the ashes. The totem is burnt to a cinder, but the large bones are preserved intact, pulverized and mixed with the ashes of the previous sacrifice. Then each participant carefully takes [506] the portion due him and keeps it for himself. The sacrificer's portion is always much the largest.

Finally, "substitution" of totems occasionally takes place. It may be that some kinds of totem are very hard to procure, especially in an emergency. This would be the case with a panther, an elephant, or certain rare plants. The procedure, then, is one of substitution, either by simply making a figure in clay or wood, an effigy roughly reproducing the totem, or by making merely a head. But with this image the consecrator will use the same formulae and ritual and will represent symbolically those that cannot actually be performed, like blood exchange. The effigy is always first painted with the symbolic colors, then, after an offering is made, sprinkled with the victim's blood.

b) Sacrifice to the totem

These are of various kinds.

German writers often place sacrifices in different categories, such as expiation (Sühnopfer), thanksgiving (Dankopfer), and petition (Bittopfer). This division is more specious than real, at least as far as totemic sacrifice is concerned. Therefore, with Max Müller [Footnote omitted. --Editor], I prefer to look upon them as regular and occasional sacrifices.

Occasional sacrifices I consider, with Mauss [Footnote omitted. --Editor], to be, first, the sacramental sacrifices associated with the solemn events of life, votive sacrifices, and finally curative and expiatory sacrifices.

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782 Regular or periodic sacrifices are associated with certain fixed occasions, independent of man's will and of chance. These are: the daily sacrifice, that to the new moon, and that of first fruits.

Occasional sacrifices are usually blood offerings, accompanied by rites that have earned the name "communional." [507] In almost all these, there is communion through the victim, and all present partake in the sacrifice.

Periodic totemic sacrifices are, on the other hand, rarely bloody or "communional."

In general, the African considers his own interests first. He usually pays rather little attention to his totem, except for certain rites laid down by custom, from which he would not dare to deviate. Thus, every morning, the first wife or most important woman, in the name of the head of the family, anoints with oil the figure upon the box (évora biéri) that contains both the ancestral skulls and the materialized totem. Also, at the time of the new moon, an offering is made to this same Biéri, to the ancestors and totem together, the two cults being united in a common gift.

But when a Fan has some favor to ask, wants to acquire something, like a wife, an object, etc., he will hasten to make a sacrifice to the totem. The more urgent the need, and the more important the object, the more substantial will be the sacrifice, ranging from a hen to a human victim, sometimes even to the ritual sacrifice of the chief himself or at least of one of his children.

The sacrifice of thanksgiving does not exist for the Fan; he would view it as "give and take" and he would be astonished if asked to give thanks: he has offered a sacrifice to his totem, the latter has granted his prayer, which means that the totem is satisfied. Why do any more? If a new need arises, then only will it be time to have recourse again to his totem. Meanwhile he had best leave things alone. Each is satisfied with the other.

As for expiatory sacrifice, it is one of the most common. Every time an African has an accident, a misfortune, a calamity, perhaps merely lack of success, he attributes it to his totem's

779 having been offended by some nsem or ritual impurity, by the
● 782 violation of an éki, etc., whence the necessity of appeasing the totem. The greater the misfortune, the more serious must have been the cause or the fault, even though involuntary, and the more to be expiated by a larger sacrifice. [508]

At the basis of all general rites concerned with the race, we find sacrifice in one form or another, either bloody "communional," or bloody and not "communional," or not bloody, or simply as an offering.

In these sacrifices the victim is often the totem itself. But in that case there will always have been a previous offering of another victim. That victim may sometimes be the officiant himself, as in circumcision, when the sacrificer or operator is but an agent.

II. Lustral Water; médzim akum

779 In almost all totemic sacrifices, lustral water is used. The
782 practitioner boils water in a clay pot, making an infusion with
783 various plants. The most commonly used are: ava, a sort of
[824] fragrant labiate; asèp, a strong-smelling mint; esun (hua gabonensis), a tree with a garlicky smell; esèp (monodora myristica), with an equally strong scent; and in addition, the leaves of elun, ombien, and several others. Nearly always eleven plants are used, which must have been picked at the new moon. To these are added a few pieces of meteorite and the remains of a sacrifice offered to the tribal totem, consisting of ashes, bone, and a few bits of horn or hoof, also a little dried blood.

Before beginning, the practitioner or head of the family dips his hands in the lustral water. With this he sprinkles the participants, using a dè, (1) a kind of fly swatter usually made

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1. The dè is the insignia of chiefs. In former times, only they were allowed to use an elephant's tail as a fly swatter, when they themselves had killed the animal.

779 from an elephant's tail. He then sprinkles the victim, the
782 ancestral skulls, and finally the totem.
783 Upon returning from battle, warriors wash their weapons in lustral water so as to ward off the malevolent spirits of the dead.

Lustral water is also used in sacrifices made in expiation of violations of éki.

Afterwards the water is emptied in a remote spot. The chief often carries it back to the village and uses it to water the
[824] tree, usually a fig tree, that was planted over the remains of his umbilical cord. This tree is an emblem of his own life, and the lustral water is in this case a sort of sacrifice. [509]

III. Fasting; nzè akhu

779 All important totemic ceremonies are preceded by fasts.
785 They are very strict, and the least infraction entails grave penalties.

They always take place in seclusion: those who are fasting are kept apart in the forest far from the village, shut up in small huts. During the fast it is strictly forbidden to drink or eat before sundown and to wash with water, although rubbing one's body with ashes is allowed. Furthermore, certain meats and fruits are prohibited, such as boiled food or fruit; fermented drinks, except on certain sacred days and before initiations, when, on the contrary, it is obligatory; and drinking from any kind of pot. If someone takes a drink inadvertently, the pot must be broken right away; nevertheless this act involves a ritual fault and requires expiation. One is supposed to drink from a brook, using
[834] a leaf rolled into a cone (oké ésaga). Finally, throughout the fast all intercourse with women is absolutely prohibited (évek).

779 The duration of the fast varies with the ceremony and the initiation. For circumcision, for instance, it lasts usually a
785 lunar month (ngon). Other initiations rarely exceed seven days,
821 let us say a lunar quarter, abɔ̂ ngon; the last quarter is usually chosen (mété méngon). The moon plays an important role in all

totemic ceremonies, or in even just religious ones. None may be performed while the moon is dark or when it is full (ngon éto ndzuge: the moon is closed). In the ceremonies at which the chief performs alone, the fast lasts three and a half days, a half lunar quarter; the fast begins at nearly full moon (nsoso ngon) and ends at full moon (nduge ngon).

IV. Totemic Dances: adzém ba dzém akhu

Dance plays such a large part in Fan life, as it does in that of every African, that it would be very unlikely to be absent from religious and totemic life. Besides, we know that dancing has always been associated with [510] religious phenomena among all peoples and in all epochs. David danced before the Ark of the Covenant; Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans had their sacred dances; and even in our day, in quite recent times, have we not seen in Madrid the seises, the altar boys of Seville, performing their graceful dances before the blessed sacrament?

The Fan have their religious dances, and special ones for each rite. We may divide them into several classes: purely religious dances, with which we are not concerned; those that accompany totemic rites; and, finally, purely totemic dances.

Among the dances accompanying totemic rites, the principal ones are dances of sacrifice and of circumcision and mortuary dances.

As the name indicates, dances of sacrifice accompany all sacrifices and are danced before and after, and each has it characteristic features.

The dance taking place before a sacrifice is serious. The chief, then all the participants, circle slowly around the victim to a tom-tom beating out a solemn rhythm. The movements of this dance are all slow and restrained, knees are bent slightly, elbows pushed back, with hands near the hips. It is more a rhythmic march than a true dance.

The dance taking place after a sacrifice is of quite another character. The rhythm is very fast, arms are raised into the air,

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782 legs are flung to right and left alternately; two very lively steps,
535 a pause, two successive jetés to the right and left, and a swaying of the body above the hips make up this dance, which has real beauty and does not lack a certain style.

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881 The circumcision dance is entirely different. The young candidates, painted white from head to foot and dressed in gar-
535 ments of leaves, are led by the initiator before the assembled
304 participants, as soon as the preparatory rites have ended and the operation is to be performed. Grown, circumcised men stand on one side, the ritual experts in the middle, those to be circumcised [511] on the other side. The dance begins. First of all, it consists of an immense circle, which spreads out and turns around the area; then the movement quickens, hands are dropped, and each person leaps and shimmies about on his own, still keeping time, which is marked out by the tom-tom. Moreover, in spite of what appears to be disorder, one soon sees that all movements are regular, perfectly conceived and executed without a hitch, without mistake, without getting out of step. Soon sweat is pouring down the dancers' arms and legs; one after another they go back to their places; only the candidates continue and their dance turns into a spinning in almost one place, on the toes, with hands stretched horizontally. Then, suddenly, at a signal from the tom-tom, the dance stops abruptly: the young dancers rush to their places, sit down, and the operations begin.

Each time the practitioner circumcises a boy, he stands up, holding in his hand proof of the operation, then does a quick dance step consisting of a few merry leaps, to the accompaniment of a special song, which everyone sings together.

When the operations are over, the youths who have been circumcised perform a short dance intended to show their fortitude; it is of just a few steps, done any old way. Then the boys quickly return to their huts, held up by their friends.

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535 The funeral dance is much more beautiful. Far from being dignified and solemn, the fanki is exceedingly lively and complicated, representing, theoretically, the soul of the dead man leaving his body and later reaching the world of spirits.

881 look at it as a vestige of primitive tradition.
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779 To the Fan mind, circumcision is altogether a religious, never a secular, act; everything that I shall have to say about it will illustrate this further.

2) The age of circumcision

The age at which Fan boys are circumcised usually varies from seven to ten. I have never seen a baby circumcised. However, there is nothing prescribed by law or custom on this point. Yet in the interior, the age of ten is far exceeded, and it is not unusual for the operation to take place between sixteen and twenty. Old men are unanimous in saying that this was the ancient custom, and that the time for the operation was made earlier in recent times because of the many casualties that occurred. It is impossible to determine precisely what they mean by "recent times." However, according to all the evidence I could gather, one should hardly go back [522] more than 200 to 300 years, that is, to the time of the great Fan migrations. We can see how unlikely it would have been during that period of confusion to perform the operation successfully at so late an age.

Formerly, circumcision must have closely preceded entering the warrior stage. Certain Fan songs seem to indicate this, and many African tribes have preserved the custom.

All the children of a village are circumcised at the same time at the tribal chief's command; the operation only takes place at certain times, when there appear to be enough children, yearly in some villages, at longer intervals in small ones.

[291] Until circumcision, children may go naked; afterwards a bit of cloth bark of the fig tree will always be worn.

881 The seven-to-ten-year limit is appreciably exceeded in
304 the following case: a father may, out of pride, make a solemn
779 vow to his akaméyôn that his son will not be circumcised until
● 782 he [the son] has killed an enemy. Under those conditions the youth may go naked for a long time; nor can he have any relations with a woman or even live with the one his father may have bought for him as a future wife. Consequently, he will

881 304 779 ●782 do all he can to end this state. As soon as he has killed an enemy, he hurries with the victim's hand to his father. Circumcision then solemnly takes place before all the warriors, and his marriage is celebrated as soon as the wound has healed.

3) Time of the ceremony

881 304 779 The chief first decides upon the date, which is almost invariably in the eight days before a full moon.

As soon as the chief has announced that circumcision will shortly take place, he indicates all the children who are to be included; they, under his direction, go off into the forest not far from the village. After a large space has been cleared, they [342] build open little huts or mere shelters, where they live all together.

Their food is left at the beginning of the path leading to the huts, for no one is supposed to approach; access [523] is above all strictly forbidden to women. The food is plentiful, [264] and nothing must be thrown away or hidden; everything must be eaten, and the chief supervises this rigorously. (1)

1. One of our missionaries observed the same custom among the more advanced populations of the interior. He even mentions this fact: the rule is so strict that one of the candidates was forced three times in succession to swallow the food that his stomach persistently rejected.

4) Preparations

[351] All around the place where the boys are confined, a fence of reeds (1) is erected, which no one dares jump over. This seclusion

1. The place of circumcision shows well enough that the rite is like a consecration, by blood sacrifice, of the sexual life to which the young man is thereafter admitted. Lagrange, op. cit., p. 244.

The practitioner operates quickly, assisted by the chief of the tribe. Before operating on each child, he hands the knife [525] to the chief, without a word, and the latter accepts it, also in silence, without saying the usual "thank you" or "very good," abora or mvè.

With girls none of these ceremonies are observed. An experienced matron performs the operation, usually when the child is very young. It is nevertheless a religious act, accompanied by songs and dances, but since only women are present, it was impossible for me to learn the slightest detail.

The tribal chief immediately returns the knife to the practitioner, saying, "Take it and do what has to be done." (Nôñe n'ébo dzam ma yia n'ébo, lit., "Take it so as to do the deed which 'I' ought to do.") This proves that the practitioner is but the chief's delegate. Usually it is the latter who holds the penis firmly. First of all, the father pulls out the foreskin as far as possible and ties it with a bit of string. The penis, thus prepared, is then stretched out on a special board, and the practitioner cuts quickly. This is the most painful part of the operation. Ashes are then rubbed on the open wound. The head of the family carefully collects the blood, which will constitute a powerful fetish after it has been offered in sacrifice to the mvamayôñ and to the ancestors.

It is a point of honor for the children not to cry out, no matter what the pain. Besides, the pain must be very much lessened by the fact that the chief squeezes the flesh firmly and the operator works quickly. As soon as it is over, the child is taken to be bathed and is then laid on a bed of ashes. His scanty clothing is removed, if that has not already been done during the preceding days, and he is now dressed in a loose garment or a belt from which hangs a thick pad of raffia fiber or thin strips of finely cut banana tree bark, so as to protect him from being hurt. After the operation every father offers the practitioner a present, often a sheep or at least several hens. The latter then, according to the customary rites, offers one of the sheep to the spirits and has part of it burnt. The ashes of the sacrifice, mixed with the collected blood, will constitute the child's fetish. Anything left over is carefully buried in a place

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In you the last returns to the first,
The first returns to the last.
And in common accord,
Your breath that does not die reunites them all,
Your breath reunites them without ever wearying.

It makes an unending whole,
And future children, offspring of our race,
Will also be your children, O father!
As I today am your child.

The éfirfira grows and continues to grow.
New branches start from its gnarled trunk,
One after another,
They grow, yet remain always the éfirfira.

In you the last returns to the first,
The first returns to the last. [539]

779 622 782 A gelded goat or often a gelded dog is then brought to the wooden altar; it is immolated, and the blood is collected in a clay pot. The chief dips a green palm branch in the blood and then puts it on the altar in such a way as to cover both the totems and the ancestral skulls.

779 622 533 After this first "recognition" comes a second, which consists of a song called "Song of the Visit." The chief sings it, and all the participants repeat the refrain. Thus the Yendun tribe, for instance, the refrain is:

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Bi'ne biböñe bi Ndun,
Bi'ne fogo bisésé biböñe bi Ndun
Ndun a ne Esa bie,
Ndun ve Esa bie bisé.

We are the children of Ndun,
Yes, we are all the children of Ndun,
And Ndun is our father,
Yes, Ndun is the father of us all.

517 from this comes about the endless palavers about everything and nothing, for lack of anything else to do.

721 However, if for one reason or another war threatens the tribe or has to be declared, the Fan then seems to awaken from his lethargy. Before the decision to fight, [550] there must be lengthy palavers. The totem has but a small part in these palavers, but no warrior would put in his word without having first taken his totem in hand and given it a brief scolding, often just one word, an exclamation, which only the most attentive would hear.

721 637 When all the warriors have had their say, the chief rises and sums up everything that has been said, before beginning his own speech. During this report, he usually remains at his place. He then goes to the middle of the assembly, his chief's baton in his hand and across his chest the baldrick from which the akaméyòn always hangs. "I am so-and-so," he begins, "son of so-and-so, and my father was chief of the race. We are the sons of such-and-such totem, and our akaméyòn protects us." After [201] these words, he stamps on the ground with his foot, or more often, with his baton, as if to testify to the truth of what he has said, and then gives his own opinion. When he has finished he holds up the tribal totem to bear witness to his words, then returns to his place.

779 721 ●782 If war is declared the totemic ceremonies are more pronounced. At first they will be nearly like those described for the initiation and consecration of the chief. The same altar is put up in the forest with the same rites; wood of the éfirfira is again used for construction. On the appointed day, all the warriors make their way into the forest, each head of a family carrying his évora biéri. The skulls are set out on the altar, and each totem at its place. The victim is then brought forward.

The scene at this point changes completely. Neither a dog nor a kid is immolated -- it must always be a man, either a prisoner of war or some captive bought back from a neighboring tribe. A woman may never replace a man. Nor may a man or child belonging to the tribe, nor one whose mother belonged either to the tribe or to an allied tribe, be used as victim; for

779 that would be against totemic law and would mean sacrilege.
721 In order to avoid this ritual offense, which would necessitate ex-
piation and would necessitate expiation and would furthermore
●782 wipe out all the efficacy of the sacrifice, the chief first of all
approaches [551] the victim, and asks his name, race, and
tribe. Is there no obstacle to the sacrifice? ´A ne mvè," he
cries, "a ne nwuba (he is good, he is 'dedicated')!" The man
is then tied to the foot of the altar and very rarely does he re-
[761] sist. All Africans resign themselves to death with almost un-
conscious ease, when they see that it is inevitable. (1)

1. In certain villages I have sometimes met such men destined for sacrifice, because they are often kept for many weeks. They walked around in the villages, apparently free, well fed, and well treated; the only sign of their captivity was a rather light block of wood well fastened to one of their feet, which they dragged along. Within the village this shackle was not much of an encumbrance, but in the forest it would have been an almost insurmountable obstacle to flight. Countless times, I have offered either to help them escape or to have the colonial authority free them. "What for?" they used to reply; "I'm well fed and treated; death is going to come anyway. Awu nzu mbèmbè! (What's the use!)"

So as to prevent any possible struggle, the evening before,
[276] the victim is given an intoxicating beverage, containing mostly
the juice of ebè and of yam (hemp). As soon as he has been
779 tied to the altar, and the chief has pronounced the ritual words,
721 the warriors start putting on their war dress. First they paint
782 their bodies red with baza (1) dye, and upon this first layer they
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1. Pterocarpus angolensis: the wood is

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mashed and mixed with oil and produces a splendid, very lasting red dye.

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draw white horizontal lines with white clay (mfem). A wide black circle is traced around the eyes; on the forehead each one draws the likeness or symbol of his tribal or clan totem, or instead, they sometimes draw it on their temples or cheeks. Thus the "axe" of the Amvom, actually the likeness of a boa, their totem serpent, winds over their cheeks and temples and ends near the eyes. To enliven this image, the juice of a grassy lily, the chlorophyton (ayân é si), is used, which gives a long-lasting, blueish color. On the chest each one then draws his individual totem in black with gardenia juice.

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Once they have finished these preparations, the warriors pick up their weapons and fetishes and begin the war dance, which consists of two parts: a totemic dance and then the real war dance, [552] which has a stronger beat and is more lively. I have already described this before in connection with the war song, which here accompanies the dance.

After the war dance the chief approaches the victim. He is forced to his knees; the practitioner draws a white line on his neck, then violently pulls his head forward, while an assistant twists his arms behind his back. The practitioner cuts off his head at one quick blow with the sacrificial knife, and tosses it onto the altar. The chief collects the spouting blood in a pot kept for the purpose, a new pot which will afterwards be broken. As soon as the blood stops, the corpse is laid on fresh banana leaves and the practitioner, helped by the chief, opens his chest, taking care to use only two knife strokes: one across and one up and down. The heart is taken out and placed beside the skulls; then the lungs and liver are removed. According to the body's
[787] last twitching and the position of the organs, the practitioner predicts the outcome of the war. It will either be fortunate or cause the death of many warriors. "The funeral songs will last a long time," he may say, and the crowd will raise a cry of distress! If on the contrary the auguries are favorable, there will be shouts of joy, a song of triumph and gladness.

721 779 782 266 608 Everyone then comes near, the chief first, and dips a finger into the pot of blood and tastes it. The practitioner also dips in his finger and with it touches each warrior's totem to make the so-called racial mark (ndem ayön). "Adopted" warriors are excluded from this ceremony, perhaps the only occasion when a distinction is drawn between them and the tribe; in some smaller clans they are not excluded from this ceremony.

721 779 782 When a tribe is populous and a single victim would not be enough, two, three, and sometimes ten or more are provided.

As soon as each warrior has thus "renewed the mark," the sacred dances start again. During that time the chief joins in at first, then takes what remains of the blood, smears his ancestral skulls with it, and then sprinkles the tribal totems while the warriors sing the totem song. [553] The practitioner, helped by his acolytes makes a kind of large sticky ball from the sap of certain rubber creepers (1) and a kind of gum,(2) and knead it inside [824]

1. Landolphia Klaineana and Thollonii of the Apocyneceae.

2. This gum is produced by the Acacia erubescens Wildm. of the acacia family.

the victim's thoracic cavity so that it becomes soaked with blood. At the end of the ceremony he takes a bit from this ball and applies [787] it to each warrior's chest. According to how long it sticks, it will give an augury about the warrior's life, death, and the wounds he will receive.

721 782 266 As soon as the ceremonies are completed the victims are cut into thin strips, and each person receives his share. The feast begins. This is the end of the actual totemic ceremony, to be followed from then on by purely religious and fetishist rites. I therefore need say no more on the subject.

721 After the meal, the dance, and the songs, the skulls and totems are put back in the évora biéri and carried back to the huts.

224 ditch, its point in the air, so that any animal falling in will almost certainly be pierced. Having finished with these preliminaries, the hunters make ready to actually beat for game. First there will have been a large sacrifice. Suppose a tribe has the scaly anteater (ye-mvil) for its totem. The tribal chief is the first to start on the hunt after a preparatory fast of three days. During that time he has remained apart in a small reed hut in the midst of the forest, eating only the food he brought with him, which he must first have placed on the évora biéri. He drinks only from an aromatic leaf folded into a cone; furthermore, he abstains from any relations with his wives, because contact with women is supposed at such times to be an offense against the totem (nsem éki). After these three days he makes a fetish, that is, a sacrifice to the tribal or clan totem, according to the usual practice; it consists of a goat at least or better a sheep. Formerly always and nowadays even occasionally, it was always a slave. After the sacrifice [555] the chief takes part of the victim -- the rest belongs to the practitioner -- and throughout the hunt, he must eat no other meat. He then leaves and returns to the village only when he has met with, captured alive if possible, or if not, slain, the totem animal. If he kills it he must take care that none of the animal's blood drips onto the path, thus risking being profaned, for that would be another ritual offense. Therefore the chief carefully closes the wound with dry leaves and the fluff from a banana tree.

[834] [782] [567]

While returning to the village the chief must be seen by no woman; he therefore takes care to announce his arrival by a special call, which is answered by a tom-tom, and then dashes into his hut. The women who happen to be in the village, outside their huts, must go inside quickly.

[201]

The totem animal is then placed on the évora biéri. If it is too large to fit, the chief opens it and puts on the évora the brains, lungs, and heart, the three parts which contain the life principle and the various souls. The carcass is offered in sacrifice in the accustomed manner and then divided among all the hunters.

[714]

VI. The Establishment of a New Village

361 621 166 787 Various circumstances may lead to the setting-up of a new village. Worked-out land, denuded hunting anf fishing grounds, decaying huts, a disease decimating the children, the chief's death, a defeat in war, sometimes merely the wish to push on, are the principal reasons.

The spirits are consulted before departure is considered. [Footnote omitted.] There is a triple sacrifice; to the spiritual guardians of the village, to the ancestors, and to the totem. If the three replies are favorable, plans may go ahead. Otherwise, a sacrifice producing an ill-omened interpretation will be undertaken again, after a few days, until a favorable result is obtained.

361 621 After this first test a suitable location is sought. As this choice is made by delegates, the practitioner is called upon and he, with all the male inhabitants, combs the [557] surroundings of the new village, singing and dancing so as to drive away malignant spirits or any that might be injurious to the new establishment.

361 621 769 782 All the men then come together in the middle of what will be the future village, and the chief picks out the spot where he will build his own hut. A sacrifice is offered there, first to the totem and then to the spirits of the ancestors. To do this a roof of leaves is hastily erected and roughly placed on a few stakes. The évora biéri is carried underneath the roof and the chief puts in front of the unopened box a black hen and a kid.

Before slaughtering the two victims, the chief removes the akaméyôn from his baldrick and blows three times in the oviara, turning in three different directions. The objective of this ceremony is to dispel evil spirits. He then drags the akaméyôn behind him over the entire site of the new village. After one round he does another, holding the akaméyôn in his hand. Thus malignant spirits of earth and air will be dispersed. The akaméyon is then put on the évora biéri. The chief slaughters the hen by cutting off its head, grasps it by the feet, and sprinkles the akaméyôn and box. He again traverses the village, sprinkling

361 the sites of future huts with blood. The hen is then opened up
621 and divided among the principal warriors and the chief's relatives.
769 This strictly speaking, constitutes the totemic sacrifice. The
782 kid or sheep is then offered to the spirits of departed souls and to the ancestors.

After the sacrifice to ancestors the chief puts the akaméyôn
361 back at his side. From the mfex or pouch, which is never re-
621 moved, he draws forth a small bundle of dirty material wrapped
769 around a bit of red wood, ashes, and a few bones. All this
778 comes from a sacrifice to the totem like that already described. To these he adds the remnants of the recent sacrifice and buries
[824] it all deep in a hole in which he drives a strong stake of élun
[822 or éfirfira wood; sometimes a young ebony tree is also used.
842] At the top of the stake he fixes a ball of paste made of red wood, white chalk -- the colors of sacrifices and spirits, and manioc, the symbol of fertility. A part of the clan or tribal totem is also inserted. The practitioner, with many gestures, songs, and dances imprisons within it all the evil spirits of the air.
[558]

The practitioner sows maize in the middle of the village, then plants a manioc root and particularly a euphorbia (euphorbia antiquorum), and puts a small fence around, so that the plants
[787] will not be desecrated. The village's prosperity depends upon their rapid growth. Should they wither, the chosen spot will be
[824] abandoned. Euphorbia has the power of averting thunder and evil spirits by means of its bristling points. Amaryllis and immortelles are often planted at the foot of the euphorbia, along with a few stalks of sugar cane. The amaryllis and immortelles ought to come from the old village, having issued from those which the chief's first wife had formerly brought from her
[842] native village at her marriage. Sugar cane is a symbol of fertility.

241 The women plant maize everywhere after these prelimi-
361 naries, and its rapid growth ensures basic subsistence. Meanwhile the men build the huts. The first ears of maize will certainly be offered to the guardian totem. Dried and preserved in the form of a coronet, they will provide seed for the following year.

3. Marriage

119 I do not know of any truly totemic act among the com-
562 plicated religious rites connected with marriage. This absence
583 must come from the fact that women are considered to be in themselves independent of the totem.

584 Before marriage, especially before starting to make the
119 rounds of the villages in order to pick out a future companion, a young man first builds a sort of triumphal arch in front of his hut. A creeper decorated with various bits of cheap finery, fabric, green leaves, flowering branches, and ava flowers, is stretched from his house to the one opposite, on the other side of the public square or the main street of the village. Before his hut two shrubs garnished in similar fashion have their tops bound together to form a triumphal arch. The young man opens the biéri box, removes his family totem and a skull and puts them before the statue of the biéri. Then for hours, endless songs and dances will be performed. When the young man is exhausted, one of his friends takes over. The songs and dances last far into the night and start again at dawn. No one may interrupt or even enter the hut, otherwise the entire ceremony would have to be begun all over again. A woman's glance at the biéri or totem, or that of a strange man, would be enough to bring this about. Therefore, one of the young man's friends is constantly on guard to prevent such an accident; he stands in front of the hut door and sees to it that people move along briskly.

[583] This rite only takes place when a youth is contemplating marriage by abduction. He wishes in this manner to gain the good will of the biéri, the ancestors, and the totem.

On the third day in the evening the ritual dances end.
● [782] The young man immediately offers a final sacrifice, usually of a cock, a hen, and some maize, following the prescribed forms. Then, since he is not permitted to rest for even a moment, he starts out, carrying the cock, hen, and maize as his only provisions; he is not allowed to take along anything else.

595 585 Whatever the kind of marriage, the first wife is the only one considered [574] as truly legitimate. As soon as she enters her new hut, her husband leads her by the hand before the évora biéri, which is kept tightly closed. Throughout her life, the wife will never be allowed to look into the box, as that would entail a very grave ritual offense. She now takes a bit of palm oil brought from her own village, mixes it with some from her husband's mother, and rubs this symbolic mixture on the statue on top of the évora. This is a symbol of the fertility she asks of the ancestors and the guardian spirits of the race. She next puts a few grains of maize in a small basket at the base of the statue, so that her future plantations may thrive. This sacrifice should be repeated every morning, but only by the principal wife -- and it is often omitted.

[842] [782]

4. Hunting, Fishing, Husbandry

788 779 Before starting on a hunting or fishing expedition, likewise before going out to the first work on his plantation, every family head or warrior will be sure to invoke his totem. He does this first with an offering on the biéri box, then by touching his weapons, tools, or snares against the family totem.

788 224 779 In the case of hunting, the hunter, when charing his gun, mixes some of the ashes of totemic sacrifice with his small shot, puts his hand on his totem, and leaves confident of the outcome. Even if hunting does not come up to expectation, he would never dream of blaming his totem. He would think that he had had bad luck or, more likely, that he had committed some offense.

788 224 779 When going fishing, he carries some of the sacrificial ashes hidden in a rag. At the spot he thinks propitious, he always begins by throwing the ashes into the water, in order to obtain his totem's good will.

788 241 779 Likewise, when a man starts farming, at the beginning of each dry season, before giving the first ax blow to the trees to be cut down, he places some ashes or remnants of sacrifice in some kind of hole and sees to it that they are consumed by the

779
778 fire which he sets to the felled trees so as to make the necessary
241 fertilizer needed for his future crops. [575]

Returning from hunting or fishing, a man is always sure to
782 put an offering on the évora biéri: it may be a piece of the ani-
224 mal's heart and brain or part of the first fish caught, even the
226 whole fish if it is very small. The first fruits are also placed on
779 the évora. Any infraction of these rites leads to punishment that can only be atoned for by one or more sacrifices. A warrior will infallibly recognize punishment in the failure of hunting or fishing trips or in barren plantations.

The hunting or fishing offering is made by the head of the family, that of first fruits by the first wife.

5. Trade and Palavers

788 Whenever a Fan has to "talk," he is very careful to try
537 to gain his totem's good will beforehand. On such occasions
779 it is important that he be able to convince his fellow speakers or his adversaries.

The totem ceremony is very short. Before leaving for the palaver or on a trading trip, he removes from the biéri box some of the ashes of the last sacrifice and puts them into a rag, closes the box, and goes off contented.

Before beginning to "talk," he will open the package of ashes and put a bit on his forehead, lips, and throat. Thus the spiritual guardians of the race will aid his brain and inspire him with the best thoughts and the best phrases, and thus they will tell him the best words to use to convince his adversaries and obtain what he wants.

6. Disease and Death

755 The totemic ceremonies connected with disease and death
779 are of somewhat more consequence. As soon as a man falls gravely ill, the practitioner is called in. He demands in advance, to be on the safe side, the proper payment for his pains, and then

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

idea as the Bulu regarding two great gods. The *Zambe* of the Bulu is the *Anyambi* or *Sekôme* of the Fang, the *tata* or father of all things; and another god of less power than *Anyambi* or *Sekôme*, who lives in the forests and is so tall that he gathers fruit from the highest trees. Some of the old men and women profess to have seen this god of the forests.

Fang superstition includes transmigration; a departed human soul may enter any animal dwelling on top of the earth or in it. There are spirits of health and disease, also a protecting spirit belonging to a clan or tribe, in whose honour, a small basket is hung in the palaver house, containing portions of the skull of an albino, whenever obtainable, also portions of the skulls of a relative and a chimpanzee, human hair, nails and bones. This fetish or *biang* is called the *Biang Akumayong*. Most Fang have a cabalistic word assigned to them by the *nyangan* (witch doctor), and this word is used as a prayer. During the new moon, dances are nearly always indulged in, and the songs usually addressed to the spirits of Present and Future. Local spirits need constant propitiation; a native passing in his canoe a spot where a local spirit dwells, as a large rock, will pay his respects by casting a piece of his food into the river, or when in the forest a few stones or a piece of *mbôs* (cassava) is laid at the root of some great tree.

Wooden idols are not plentiful among the Fang tribes living along the rivers; they are seen more in the palaver houses of the bush towns.

Charms.—These may be only cabalistic words, and under this head of vocal charms must be included the incantations of the *nyangan* (witch doctor).

Material charms.—These are by far the most common; the belief in material charms, fetish, occupies the most prominent place in Fang religious contemplation.

Among the Fang, the English word Fetish, from the Portuguese word Feticio, is *Biang* (medicine). A Fang fetish is any material object which the *nyangan* (doctor) has consecrated and made a fit abiding place for a spirit. What may be consecrated? Anything, absolutely anything; a shell, rag, stone, twig of a tree, horns, nails, etc. The horns of small antelope and large deer are filled with resins, nails, human hair, faeces, etc. To bewitch a person it is necessary to give the *nyangan* a piece of the hair, nail, a portion of the food or a drop of blood of the person to be bewitched. A Fang is most careful if he cuts himself to see that only friends and relations approach him until the bleeding has ceased, and hair when cut is usually burnt without delay. As mentioned in the section of this paper on food, every child during infancy is subjected to certain rites which constitute his or her *Ebi*, prohibiting the child from eating a certain kind of food or performing a certain act. Thus far, the superstitious beliefs of the Fang and Bulu are precisely similar, and I gathered from Dr. Nassau at Gaboon many facts connected with the people among whom he laboured, the Mpongwe, which showed that they also held superstitious beliefs very nearly, and in some cases precisely similar to those of the Bulu and Fang, the only difference being in the